



The

MARKETPLACE

For Recycling Commodities

Kentucky Recycling Assistance Section

December 2016

PET Container Recycling Rate Falls Slightly

As reported by *Resource Recycling*, the U.S. recycling rate for PET containers has dropped just under 1 percentage point to 30.1.

According to the 2015 PET recycling activity report by the National Association for PET Container Resources (NAPCOR) and the Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR), nearly 1.8 billion pounds of PET containers were recycled in 2015. The groups estimate that just under 6 million pounds of PET containers were available for recovery.

Kate Eagles, program director of NAPCOR, said plastics recycling is a strong industry that had a tough year.

"In 2015 there were some very challenging market conditions—very broadly, the slowing of global economics and downward price pressure on virgin PET," she said. "And that downward price pressure on virgin PET impacts margins for the competitive production of recycled PET."

The recycling rate has hovered around 30 percent for the past few years. The rate in 2014 was 31.0 percent. In 2013, it was 31.2 percent, and it came in at 30.8 percent in 2012.

The report on 2015 found that the number of bottles available for recycling during the year went up more than 2 percent. That is due to an increase in the sale of water and specialty beverages. At the same time, lightweighting and "rightsizing" of bottles continues, bringing down the overall recovery rate, according to the report.

The majority of the containers collected for recycling went to U.S. reclaimers in 2015, but 75 million pounds were exported to Canada, a sharp increase from the 45 million pounds in 2014. Just under 350 million pounds went to other markets, down slightly from the year before.

Both the U.S. and Canada added one PET processing plant to their networks, but the amount of PET processed went down in both countries, the study indicated.

Furthermore, the reported price for bales of East Coast, non-deposit PET containers declined over the course of 2015. Prices were at 16 cents per pound in January and dropped to 9 cents per pound by December.

The Surprising Factors That Can Stymie Materials Diversion

Even the most well-intentioned residents don't always recycle. According to a recent set of studies, the reason why may be more complicated than just laziness or lack of access.

Resource Recycling reported on tests recapped recently by Remi Trudel in the *Harvard Business Review* where researchers found two biases that affect disposal habits.

The first is called distortion bias. People are more likely to throw an item away if it has been altered in some way. Whole pieces of paper, for example, are more likely to be recycled than paper that has been torn into pieces, and dented cans are more likely to be tossed into the garbage than pristine ones. Researchers say people view altered items as useless, or no longer having a purpose.

A factor called identity bias was also discussed in the study. This idea posits that people are more likely to recycle something that is linked to their own self-image. For example, the researchers used cups from coffee shops that had customer names written on them.

If a name was spelled correctly, it was recycled more often than not. If the name was spelled wrong, the cup was more likely to get trashed.

Researchers also stated moral licensing can affect recycling behavior. According to the study results, the option to recycle is tied to how much of an item is used. Researchers told people ahead of time whether or not they would be able to recycle the items they were using—such products included scrap paper, wrapping paper and plastic cups.

The study found those people who knew they could recycle the items used more of the material.

COMMODITY	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
<u>PAPER-\$/TON</u>	RecyclingMarkets.Net/Secondary Fiber Pricing (Midwest/Central Region) FOB							
-	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
#2 mixed paper	\$60-65	\$60-65	\$65-70	\$65-70	\$65-70	\$65-75	\$70-75	\$40-45
#37 sorted office paper (SOP)	\$130-140	\$130-140	\$140-150	\$140-150	\$140-150	\$155-160	\$155-160	\$105-115
#8 ONP	\$70-75	\$75-80	\$80-85	\$80-85	\$80-85	\$80-90	\$80-90	\$45-50
#40 sorted white ledger (SWL)	\$175-185	\$175-185	\$185-195	\$200-205	\$200-205	\$205-210	\$205-210	\$190-200
#11 OCC	\$80-85	\$85-90	\$95-100	\$95-100	\$95-100	\$95-105	\$95-105	\$65-70
<u>PLASTICS-¢/LB.</u>	RecyclingMarkets.Net/Secondary Materials Pricing - FOB							
-	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
#1 PET - mixed (clear & green)	\$0.10	\$0.11	\$0.11	\$0.10	\$0.09	\$0.10	\$0.10	\$0.08
#2 HDPE (natural-milk jugs)	\$0.39	\$0.38	\$0.32	\$0.27	\$0.28	\$0.28	\$0.24	\$0.29
#2 HDPE (colored-detergent btls.)	\$0.22	\$0.16	\$0.16	\$0.18	\$0.22	\$0.20	\$0.13	\$0.25
<u>GLASS-\$/TON</u>	RecyclingMarkets.Net/Secondary Materials Pricing - Delivered							
-	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
clear (flint)	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$31.00	\$32.00
brown (amber)	\$28.00	\$28.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$22.00
green	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$13.00	\$11.00
<u>METALS</u>	RecyclingMarkets.Net/Secondary Materials Pricing - Baled/Densified							
-	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
aluminum beverage cans (UBC) cents/lb.	\$0.59	\$0.58	\$0.58	\$0.58	\$0.58	\$0.62	\$0.62	\$0.55
	RecyclingMarkets.Net/Secondary Materials Pricing - Baled							
	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Dec-15
steel cans \$/TON	\$100-130	\$90-95	\$90-100	\$90-100	\$80-100	\$55-65	\$65-90	\$24-32



Energy and
Environment Cabinet

Kentucky Recycling Assistance Section

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